



Lune Group Oy Ltd

UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

Communication on Progress 2018

lunette

Forewords and statement of continued support

It is with excitement Lunette is presenting its first Communication on Progress Report 2017-2018. Lune Group Oy Ltd (hereafter Lunette) is pleased to participate in the UN Global Compact Network and to report on our commitment in responsible business through presenting our activities and recent progress. We're committed to human rights and sustainable development as part of all our business activities and wish to express our continued support to the UN Global Compact.

Sustainability and human rights are at the core of Lunette's business operations. Lunette believes that a holistic approach to sustainability is a vital part of good business strategy. We are constantly striving to include these values in the company's policies and activities and are committed to improving our sustainability performance.

In the recent years and with increasing effort since 2017, Lunette has been taking its corporate responsibility towards a new level in our own operations and also through expanding operations through increased activity in developed and developing countries. We believe that despite being a small company we can achieve greater systemic change, through raising discussions on menstrual health to the forefront. We're fearlessly raising questions related to sexual and reproductive health, which with increasing intensity are being silenced in many corners of the world.

We're proud to be a participant of the UN Global Compact, after our application was approved in junction with the UN General Assembly Week in September 2017, when I had the opportunity to take part in a high-level panel on economic empowerment of women organized in New York. This last year has been tremendously exciting, in terms of results and new partnerships we've tied for increased impact. The space for discussions on sexual and reproductive health and rights is shrinking, but we've proven that the private sector has a crucial role to play as advocates and drivers of change.

JOIN US ON OUR JOURNEY!



HELI KURJANEN

CEO & FOUNDER, LUNE GROUP OY LTD

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COMMUNICATION ON
PROGRESS

This is our **Communication on Progress** in implementing the principles of the **United Nations Global Compact** and supporting broader UN goals.

We welcome feedback on its contents.

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This report covers the period of July 2017 until June 2018.



ABOUT

Lune Group Oy Ltd (Lunette)

Lunette is a company based in Juupajoki, Finland with a subsidiary in the US and established presence in the UK, Germany and Austria. We specialize in sales and promotion of Lunette Menstrual Cups manufactured in Finland. In 2017, the net turnover of the company was EUR 6 million. The menstrual cups were, in 2017, sold to over 40 countries.

Lunette was founded in 2005 and has become one of the leading menstrual cup producers in the world. The high quality of our main product continues to be an important factor in positioning ourselves successfully in a competitive global marketplace, largely dominated by non-sustainable disposable period care products.

Receiving the national "Entrepreneur of the Year" award in Finland in December 2017 was a testament to the organization's entrepreneurial journey, and talent, and we're more committed than ever to sustainable development and human rights – UN Global Compact Core Values – as part of our business model and spirit.

LUNETTE'S APPROACH TO Sustainability

Respect for the environment, society and human rights is fundamental to Lunette. Without a sustainable development of society, we cannot reach an enabling environment which is crucial for a productive, competitive and efficient business. We believe that contributing to sustainable development, the SDGs and an improved human rights situation globally is our responsibility and honor. Menstrual health continues being a key area relevant especially to SDG Goals 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 12.

Lunette's vision is a dynamic business, beyond stereotypes and driven by innovation and an unlimited female entrepreneurial spirit. Lunette aims to think beyond the limits, to discover the hidden potential in everybody who menstruates, to ensure no one is being left behind, in line with the pursuit of the SDGs. The fact that we're small and dynamic helps us monitor and drive fast improvement in the sustainability-sphere; both internally and with the suppliers and partners we work with.

Our main product is the Lunette Menstrual Cup. Menstrual cups are economic, ecological and safe menstrual care option. Lunette Menstrual Cups are bell-shaped objects made of medical grade silicone, inserted in to the vagina to collect (instead of absorbing) menstrual blood. Menstrual cup is a waste-free innovation, which lasts for years thanks to the durability of the high-quality silicone. The minimal amount of solid waste produced is a significant advantage over disposable products. Only a small amount of water is required for cleaning the cup, which reduces the burden of menstrual health management on the water infrastructure. Our high quality Lunette Menstrual Cups are BPA and latex free, and safe to use. We also produce and sell Lunette Feelbetter Cup Cleanser and Cupwipes for cleaning, ease and comfort.

Poor menstrual health in many regions of the world relates to economic and social rights, including right to health, water and sanitation, education and work. Numerous research reports show that it is to a large degree a neglected issue, both in the UN system and by country governments, even other actors, much due to the related taboos and stigma still connected to menstrual health. The opportunity to manage one's menstruation related inherently to the well-being of persons who menstruate and a precondition for realization of other rights. We take our responsibility for positive impact seriously, and strive to partner in advocacy efforts to raise awareness about and to break menstrual taboos.

This is Lunette's first Communication on Progress report. Our activities focus on those areas in which we have expertise and know-how. We take a proactive approach to social and environmental responsibility throughout the value chain, based on the UN Global Compact's 10 principles. We assess all of our operations – suppliers and partners – often with the support of external consultants and experts, in order to ensure that we avoid adverse human rights impact, while we aim to achieve measurable positive impact.

	Our operations and suppliers	Product use
SOCIAL: Social impact of operations; improving women and girl's health rights and quality of life	<div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>
ECONOMIC: Influence on the broader economy; economic impact on women and girls	<div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>
ENVIRONMENTAL: Impact of operations, materials and packaging; environmental impact of product use	<div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>-</div> <div></div> </div>	<div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div>+</div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>

Our greatest impact relates to the use of our products, not only in western countries but also through activities in developing countries. In terms of our own operations and suppliers, we strive to uphold strict standards and thoroughly monitor impact.

Silicone and menstrual cup production

Lunette Menstrual Cups are made from medical grade silicone. Silicone, a polymer made with oxygen, is extracted from silica and passed through hydrocarbons derived from fossil energy. Thus, production of silicone is not carbon neutral nor is the product biodegradable, although it has been established that it can be burned safely at the end of its lifespan. Medical grade silicone is tested for allergens and made as pure and inert as possible.

The medical grade silicone for Lunette Menstrual Cups is sourced from a supplier in the EU. Neglecting work safety measures in silicone fabrications may dispose workers to silica dust or toxic gases (e.g. methyl chloride) which may cause silicosis.

The Lunette Cups are manufactured in Finland. Work safety regulations in Finland are effective in preventing manufacturing related health and safety risks. Lunette Cups are pressed only from medical grade silicone and in this process the work safety risks are smaller when adequate protection and safety measures are taken. There are strict rulings for storing and labeling chemicals.

Lunette places emphasis on following environmental standards and places significant efforts on developing environmentally friendly packaging. The packaging of the cups is fully plastic free and therefore recycle and compostable.

Product use: social impact

The old and restrictive perceptions on menstruation and lack of access to safe period care protection, discriminate women and girls and deprive their equal rights to study, work and participate in the society.

In some countries and communities, menstruation is perceived as a taboo topic and, furthermore, women and girls can be excluded from various public activities during the period of "impurity". There is often a lack of knowledge and educational materials on menstruation and menstrual health management (MHM). Women and girls do not always have the right to decide on the MHM or the cups and pads are too expensive or inaccessible.¹ Lunette aims to carry out numerous projects in hard-to-reach-areas to address these perceptions and empower girls and women.

Menstrual cups are becoming a mainstream product in the western markets. Research has been conducted on the usability and acceptability of the cups in the western context. For example, a randomized controlled trial in 2011 in Canada investigated whether menstrual cups are a viable alternative to tampons and found that approximately 91% of women in the menstrual cup group said they would continue to use the cup and recommend it to others. In a 1995 clinical study involving 51 women, 23 of the participants (45%) found menstrual cups to be an acceptable way of managing menstrual flow. There's evidence for increased preference among women for use of the menstrual cup.^{2,3} In a Lunette customer survey 88% of customers said that their quality of life during menstruation has improved while using a menstrual cup – this could both entail economic empowerment as well as aspects relating to personal comfort and flexibility.

Research has also been conducted on the acceptability of the cup in low-resource settings. A qualitative study among schoolgirls in rural Uganda concluded that most participants overcame initial challenges mastering the techniques for insertion and removal and adapted to menstrual cup use. In another qualitative study conducted among schoolgirls in rural Kenya girls preferred cups over commercial pads or traditional materials. Reasons mentioned in favor of the cups were that it would not leak, drop and was comfortable after learning the right usage. The only reported advantage of pads over cups was the easiness to start usage.⁴

Based on clinical testing quality menstrual cups (produced of tested medical grade silicone in controlled production facilities) are hygienic and safe to use. TSS caused by menstrual cup use appears to be very rare to

virtually non-existent. Rarely, the use of cup, especially if combined with gynecological concerns or infections, may also set favorable conditions for an infection. This emphasizes the need of hygiene in the use and further studies on potential health problems that may increase the risks related to the use of the cup or other sanitary protection.

Menstrual cups are not absorbent, do not irritate the vaginal mucosal tissue, and so do not change the vaginal flora in any measurable amount. Research indicates that the cup has no impact on the vaginal flora, or on the presence of *Staphylococcus aureus*, the bacterium that can cause TSS. A randomized controlled trial carried out in 2011 measured urovaginal infection in a comparison of menstrual cup and tampon use, and found no difference. No differences in the growth of *S. aureus*, or health harms were identified among school girls provided with menstrual cups compared to those using sanitary pads or continuing their usual practice in rural western Kenya.^{5,6}

Silicone has been widely used in medical science and reactive impacts of solid silicone products have been marginal. High quality silicone with no fillers used in the fabrications is highly inert. Medical grade silicone is latex free and non-allergenic. However, standard silicones have reported to release infectious chemicals in some conditions. Lunette emphasizes that it is crucial to use high quality medical grade silicone in the production of menstrual cups in order to minimize any health risks.

The use of menstrual cups requires good hygiene and access to water. Proper hand washing and cup rinsing as well as sterilizing through boiling is essential for hygienic use. Access to water, especially clean water, may be difficult in developing countries, which Lunette has taken into consideration and is a firm advocate for MHM training and sustainable WASH-solutions.

In terms of environmental impact, the use of cups significantly decreases waste when compared to disposable pads and tampons. This saves environment as well as sewage and water purification systems.

Social responsibility: activities in developing countries

Lunette has a strong vision of empowering people who menstruate globally, and breaking menstruation-related taboos. We have in 2017 carried out an extensive review of possibilities to engage, including through stakeholder engagement, and produced a robust report with findings. We are committed to adopt a rights-based approach in low resource settings, through engaging women and girls and all stakeholders in the activities we carry out. We aim to improve menstrual health management, but in a holistic manner, looking at advocacy efforts and providing adapted training as well as products, to ensure impact. The Lunette Menstrual Cup accompanied with awareness raising and training can be a powerful tool for positive transformation in the lives of women and girls. It's our responsibility to act also in hard-to-reach areas and among the most vulnerable and marginalized, where possible.

During 2017, in order to ensure our due diligence as part of these projects we embarked a year-long pre-assessment study during which we assessed not only market potential but also the acceptability and safety of the Lunette Menstrual Cup in low resource settings – both the humanitarian and development contexts. Key findings were about the potential human rights impacts and market potential of the menstrual cup, importance of education as part of introducing the menstrual cup, the benefits the menstrual cups can provide in terms of starting conversations about sexual and reproductive health and especially stigma and taboos related to menstruation, around the globe.

Below a few examples of **PILOTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR 2017-2018**, funded partially through development cooperation appropriations, through the Finnish government and the existing Finnpartnership programme (ODA-funding):

KIBERA (KENYA)

In Kibera slums The Cup Foundation in cooperation with Lunette has distributed thousands of cups to girls following the Cup's unique training methodology of a comprehensive training curricula which tackles challenges underprivileged girls and boys face while growing up, including menstrual health management. The Cup Foundation's training is based on a model where the trainers share their life stories and experiences and are available for answering questions and giving support also after the trainings. Also, research shows that peer support is also an essential driver for the acceptability of the menstrual cup.

As part of our normal operations, in 2017 Lunette also partnered with MONKI (H&M). For each sold limited edition pink "MONKI x Lunette x The Cup" Menstrual Cup one cup is donated to The Cup Foundation for the work in Kibera slums in Kenya.

MWANZA PILOT (TANZANIA)

Implemented with Fida International, and local partners (Pentecostal church of Tanzania) Lunette is piloting a comprehensive menstrual health management package in Mwanza, Tanzania, where local boys and girls receive training on puberty, reproductive health, on menstrual health and on the usage of menstrual cup. Fida has identified male and female trainers within the community who have started a training-of-trainers (ToT) programme. The ToT is done by the Cup Foundation mentioned above. The female ToTs have already received a cup and an introduction training on the usage. After the ToT the training and cup distribution is expected to be rolled out in 82 rural schools. Currently indicators are designed to measure impact on school attendance and empowerment of girls and results will be thoroughly analyzed. Implementation is pending the approval of registration of the menstrual cup with the Tanzanian authorities.

KENYAN RED CROSS PILOT (KENYA)

Kenyan red cross female staff and volunteers have received a cup and an introductory training on the usage of the cup. After this initial trial and evaluation, the cup will be introduced as part of the Red Cross WASH-shops in rural and urban areas. The WASH-shops are shops based in the communities

For each sold limited edition pink "MONKI x Lunette x The Cup" Menstrual Cup one cup is donated to The Cup Foundation for the work in Kibera slums in Kenya.



that offer a variety of sanitation-related products. The customers are reached through social marketing done mostly by Red Cross volunteers, and the customers are offered affordable prizes and flexible payment conditions.

COLLABORATION WITH THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY

We have also engaged with students – seeing that university campuses have become powerful spaces for driving change in terms of discussing sustainability and the stigma around menstruation. In 2018 partnered with Global NGO PATH and their Kenya section -a nonprofit delivering innovations of private industry to improve health for all - to create a workshop for students at the University of Nairobi in which public health and menstruation were discussed broadly, including innovative and entrepreneurial ideas that could help locally and be scaled up.

ENGAGING WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Further, in terms of the humanitarian setting we have entered discussions with various partners about interventions in the refugee settings and explored possibility of piloting initiative. We have supported UN officials, such as UNHCR staff in 2018, through planning and providing training about menstrual health management in humanitarian settings and sensitized staff to the importance of sustainable alternatives, based on preferences of young refugee girls and women (UNHCR's WASH Workshop on Menstrual Hygiene Management, conducted in collaboration with staff from AfriPads, April 2018).



One-day young entrepreneurs workshop
INNOVATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
at Nairobi Innovation Week

**TUE 6TH
MARCH
2018**

**APPLY BY 13TH
FEB
2018**

  

Co-operation with Global NGO PATH and their Kenya section -a nonprofit delivering innovations of private industry to improve health for all - to create a workshop for students at the University of Nairobi.

IMPLEMENTING THE UN Global Compact principles

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Human rights

- PRINCIPLE 1 -

Business should support and respect
the protection of internationally
proclaimed human rights

- PRINCIPLE 2 -

Business should ensure that they are
not complicit in human rights abuses

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ACTIONS AND RESULTS

Commitment: Lunette expresses the respect towards the protection of internationally recognized human rights, and is fully committed to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We are conscious of our own responsibilities as part of our own operations and towards our staff and consumers and any of the communities we are active in. We carry out due diligence of our suppliers and partners, to ensure that we are not involved in human rights abuses, and that our operations has no adverse human rights impact, whether in our own operations, or any of the partnerships and projects that we as a company are engaged in. The assessment of human rights impacts is an ongoing process at Lunette. We monitor the realization of human rights in many ways, including audits of suppliers and certifications of risk raw materials. Ensuring the safety of products and outlets is part of our daily work.

Our key suppliers are expected to protect human rights, placing great importance to complying with human rights and fair business practices. They are further expected to follow the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the ILO Core Labor Standards and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

With strong focus on improving sexual and reproductive health and rights nationally and globally, we have adopted and are following a human rights based approach as part of all of our project interventions in developing countries, in line with the UN Guiding Principles. Among the most salient potential human rights issues we have identified issues in terms of the right to health, especially in junction with use of the cup in unhygienic settings. In addition to ensuring that we are mitigating risks, we focus our efforts on where we can have positive efforts and have for instance engaged in significant advocacy efforts in terms of SRHR. We have also ensued partnerships that could be critical for us in light of ensuring that we achieve maximum positive impact in terms of SRHR, and have collaborated with governments, UN organizations, international NGOs, local NGOs, universities, private sector to respect the principles rights-based development.

Lunette has also engaged on various platforms advocating for the rights of women and girls, such as panel-attendance at the UN General Assembly

high-level breakfast discussing economic empowerment of women in 2017, World Water Week 2017 in Stockholm, the Case for Her and others. Joining the United Nations Global Compact initiative comprised another important step. By joining the UN Global Compact we want to signal to other stakeholders that we take our commitment to human rights seriously. We have also joined the global WASH in Schools-network in late 2017 and the Finnish Water Forum in 2017, to ensure that we are part of relevant networks and can meaningfully engage for maximum positive impact for people. Further, we have engaged on innovation platforms, such as OpenIdeo, to contribute to a global discussion on innovation and human centered design.

ACTIVITIES 2017-2018:

- Provision of safe and healthy working conditions for Lunette's workers, as well as health care and training opportunities are provided to workers
- Provision of access to labour for the most vulnerable, through disability programme supporting employment and employability of disabled persons, through our packaging operations and relevant partnership enabling such efforts
- Commitment to stronger focus on due diligence, in our own operations as well as in terms of our suppliers and partnerships, whether with NGOs or private sector
- Human Rights impact assessment as part of our projects. Avoiding to carry out any activities in such settings, where we have not first put efforts into creating an enabling environment with participation of local groups and communities
- Assessments on how to enhance the economic livelihood of local communities, especially women
- Through our own staff and our partners we have provided training to UN officials, NGO-representatives and staff, as well as vulnerable girls and women in developing countries.
- Training on public health issues, and health as a human right, was provided for the University undergraduate students of Kenya during Nairobi Innovation Week together with PATH Kenya.

MONITORING PROGRESS 2018-2019:

- Engage in a research on user safety, to continue ensuring safe use of the cup and take utmost measures to monitor every user's right to health
- Improve our human rights due diligence processes and engage in public discussions around the topic
- Increase training opportunities for staff in terms of human rights and sustainability
- In terms of our suppliers we will increase site-visits and increase communications to continue monitoring full respect for human rights issues among the suppliers
- Increase partnerships through the activities we carry out in developing contexts for accelerating impact



Cathy Chapman (on the left), the President of Lune North America Inc and **Heli Kurjanen** (on the right), the founder and CEO of Lune Group Oy Ltd in 2017 at the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York

Labour rights

- PRINCIPLE 3 -

Uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

- PRINCIPLE 4 -

Support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

- PRINCIPLE 5 -

Support the effective abolition of child labour;

- PRINCIPLE 6 -

Eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

ACTIONS AND RESULTS

Commitment: Lunette commits to the elimination of any discrimination in respect of employment and occupation inside and outside the company. Lunette proclaims responsibility for equal employment opportunity. The company is also committed to employee welfare and sustainable employment. We provide an interesting, attractive, and involving workplace for all employees. Our employees will be at liberty to progress in their job and develop. We focus on a staff policy with emphasis a healthy working environment, which is safe and offers opportunity to thrive. We want to ensure the right of workers to join trade unions and do not tolerate discrimination and harassment. We focus on creating a safe, healthy working environment. We are ensuring and recording that all employees, as well as contracted temporary staff, involved in various projects are paid a competitive wage, and avoid excessive overtime hours. Finally, we offer working conditions that comply with the law, relevant ILO standards and the standards of the UN Global Compact.

ACTIVITIES 2017-2018

- Lunette has committed to a non-discrimination policy, and follows these principles in all its operations
- Monitoring and improving our own operations which has helped us ensure improved working conditions
- Advocating for the right to decent work and economic empowerment for women in developing country contexts, through various platforms, events and fora
- Implementing projects that use the rights of girls and women as a point of reference, particularly in rural areas in least developed countries

MONITORING PROGRESS 2018-2019

- We will continue developing our internal policies and measure staff satisfaction
- We will continue improve occupational health and wellbeing for our staff and measure impact and satisfaction levels through discussions and surveys
- We will continue and deepen collaboration with packaging center to ensure fair and meaningful employment opportunities for vulnerable populations
- Continue developing possibility for flexibility in terms and conditions of employment conditions (such as working hours, location)

Environment

- PRINCIPLE 7 -

Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

- PRINCIPLE 8 -

Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

- PRINCIPLE 9 -

Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

ACTIONS AND RESULTS

Commitment: Lunette is proud that its core product, the Lunette Menstrual Cup, reduces the carbon footprint of menstrual health management to a minimum, as a sustainable option of menstrual health management. We encourage sustainable processes and consistently discuss environmental

challenges with other stakeholders. We focus on saving energy and reducing consumption of materials by constantly monitoring and optimizing the positive impact of our business operations and considering options for minimizing harmful environmental impact.

ACTIVITIES 2017-2018:

- We have continued to develop our packaging to use the most environmentally friendly materials available: currently the packaging of our menstrual cup is biodegradable, compostable, 100% recyclable with environmentally-friendly window made of wood pulp / cellulose. The Lunette Menstrual Cup, Feelbetter Cup Cleanser and Cupwipes are registered with The Vegan Society. The Cupwipes decompose within 6 weeks in a compost environment.
- Carried out environmental audit of key suppliers, with a view to look to assess and reduce negative impacts on the environment.
- More systematically collected data on the environmental benefits of the menstrual cup
- Developed training materials, to enhance awareness of the environmental benefits of the menstrual cup
- Joining the Finnish Water Forum in 2017, to ensure we are more actively part of an environmentally aware business community, advocating for environmentally friendly solutions
- Advocating for sustainable menstrual health management, through various fora (Nairobi Innovation Week 2018) and events, such as World Water Week 2017, and engaged on the ground in East Africa to raise awareness about environmental benefits of sustainable MHM solutions and improve possibilities for registration processes (especially task force work in Tanzania).
- We have also presented to various governments and ministries globally about benefits of sustainable solutions

MONITORING PROGRESS:

- We will continue monitoring the environmental performance in our own operations and that of our suppliers.
- We also commit to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of cup use over disposable and other reusable menstrual health management solutions, especially through increased efforts in social media and wide-reaching channels.

We will take part in Stockholm World Water Week in 2018 organizing a side-event with other partners, with the objective to increasing awareness about sustainable solutions.

Anti-corruption

- PRINCIPLE 10 -

Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Commitment: When it comes to our own business practices, we oppose any form of corruption, including blackmail and bribery. We conduct our commercial activities in accordance with international, national and local laws and regulations relevant to our business. Lunette believe that transparency and efforts for anti-corruption is the only way forward for a better economy and better societies.

ACTIVITIES:

- Lunette strives for transparency in our commercial decisions and practices. We expect that our employees and any distributors abide by the law and corresponding national legislation in the countries in which we operate.

AS PART OF OUR EFFORTS IN DEVELOPING CONTEXTS:

- We do not tolerate any corrupt practices.
- Lunette is actively cooperating with NGOs as part of these efforts and believe we have indirectly contributed to building up local capacity and knowledge on good governance.

MONITORING PROGRESS:

- Develop and publish a public anti-corruption commitment
- Written expectation of anti-corruption commitments of contractors

Sources

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